

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OCL-00 DODE-00 OC-06 CCO-00 USIA-15 L-03

EB-11 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 PM-07 SS-20

DRC-01 /094 W

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P R 021321Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7101

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, PFOR, ET, US

SUBJECT: TV CONVERSION: DISPOSITION KAGNEW TV AND  
RADIO EQUIPMENT

REFS: A) ASMARA 896; B) CNO 102359Z DEC 73

1. REQUEST DEPARTMENT CONTACT DOD AND PUT "HOLD" REPEAT "HOLD" ON  
ANY IMMEDIATE PLANS TO DISMANTLE TELEVISION AND RADIO EQUIPMENT  
AT KAGNEW STATION, DIRECTED BY REFTEL B).

2. IN VIEW RECENT DEVELOPMENTS, WE URGE THAT BOTH RADIO AND  
TELEVISION FACILITIES BE TURNED OVER TO THE IEG INTACT. REASONS  
FOR THIS ACTION INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

A) REFTEL A) INDICATED IEG HOPE THAT KAGNEW TELEVISION SYSTEM  
MIGHT BE USED AS A "SECOND CHANNEL" IN ASMARA AND THAT THE STATE-  
OWNED NETWORK COULD THEN BE RUN SEPARATELY. THIS IS NO LONGER  
THE CASE. IN A LETTER TO AMBASSADOR, THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION  
REQUESTED HIM PUT TO WASHINGTON ONCE MORE IEG'S HOPE KAGNEW SYSTEM  
MIGHT REMAIN HERE AND BE TRANSFERRED TO IEG FOR INCORPORATION INTO  
THE ETHIOPIAN TELEVISION SYSTEM, THUS BECOMING ONLY REPEAT ONLY  
STATION SERVICING THAT AREA. MINISTER POINTED OUT THAT OWNERS OF  
THE APPROXIMATELY 5-10,000 TELEVISION SETS IN ASMARA LARGELY UN-

AWARE PROGRAMMING DEPENDED SOLELY ON KAGNEW AND THAT IT WOULD BE  
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TERMINATED UPON DEPARTURE OF US MILITARY. AVERAGE COST PER SET IS

APPROX US\$350 -- AN EXPENSIVE ITEM FOR THIS ECONOMY. TV SETS WOULD BECOME WORTHLESS BECAUSE IEG UNABLE TO FINANCE COMPLETELY NEW FACILITY AT THIS TIME, OR IN NEAR FUTURE.

B) IEG FEELS CONTINUED OPERATION OF TELEVISION STATION ASMARA POLITICALLY IMPORTANT. IT IS EFFECTIVE MEANS OF COMMUNICATING WITH LARGE AUDIENCE (ESTIMATED VIEWERS APPROX 30,000-50,000) IN A REGION BESET BY INSURGENCY PROBLEMS.

C) ACCORDING TO MINISTER, STATION WOULD BE USED PRIMARILY FOR EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION. PROGRAMMING WOULD INCLUDE 7 HOURS PER DAY OF EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION AND APPROXIMATELY 3-4 HOURS PER DAY FOR COMMERCIAL PROGRAMMING. WITH ACUTE TEACHERS SHORTAGE, THIS WOULD BE OF GREAT BENEFIT TO THE LOCAL POPULACE.

3. IN LIGHT ABOVE, WE CONCLUDE THAT THE REMOVAL OF ALL OR PART OF THIS EQUIPMENT LIKELY STRAIN OUR RELATIONS WITH THE MININFO AND POSSIBLY OTHER IEG DEPARTMENTS AS WELL. REMOVAL THIS EQUIPMENT WHICH ONLY SOURCE TV PROGRAMMING IN ERITREAN CAPITAL SEEMS BOUND BE PERCEIVED AS FURTHER INDICATION OF RISING US DISINTEREST IN ETHIOPIA. WE WOULD THUS APPEAR STAND TO LOSE MORE IN OUR RELATIONS WITH IEG THAN WE WOULD GAIN IN THE DOLLAR VALUE OF THE SALVAGED EQUIPMENT.

4. AS ANCILLARY BENEFIT RETAINING TV FACILITIES HERE, WE WOULD ALSO LIKELY INCREASE THE AUDIENCE FOR USIS-PRODUCED FILMS AND DOCUMENTARIES. USIS PRODUCTS ARE USED FREQUENTLY ON ETHIOPIA TELEVISION IN ADDIS ABABA AND THESE FILMS THEREFORE LIKELY GAIN GREATER EXPOSURE IF THE IEG TAKES OVER THE FACILITY. CONVERSELY, A NEGATIVE RESPONSE ON OUR PART COULD LIMIT OUR PLACEMENT ON ADDIS TELEVISION, WHERE IN ADDITION TO THE LARGE ETHIOPIAN AUDIENCE, THERE ARE VIEWERS FROM THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY, THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA, MORE THAN 60 EMBASSIES AND NUMEROUS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WITH REPRESENTATIVES HEADQUARTERED HERE.

5. MISSION FEELS THESE FACTORS SHOULD BE CAREFULLY WEIGHED BEFORE A FINAL DETERMINATION IS MADE. THE CLOSING DOWN OF THE KAGNEW TELEVISION AND RADIO SYSTEM WOULD LEAVE A VOID IN ASMARA WHICH COULD HAVE ADVERSE REPERCUSSIONS FOR THE IEG FOR WHICH THE US WOULD INEVITABLY BE HELD RESPONSIBLE BY IT.

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6. IEG STATES IT IS PREPARED TO SPEND US\$60,000 TO TIE KAGNEW SYSTEM INTO ETHIOPIAN TELEVISION NETWORK. GIVEN THE IEG BUDGETARY PROBLEMS IN OTHER AREAS, THIS IS A SUBSTANTIAL EXPENDITURE REFLECTING THE IMPORTANCE THE GOVERNMENT PLACES ON THE CONTINUED OPERATION OF THIS FACILITY.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** RADIO BROADCASTING, TELEVISION BROADCASTING, MILITARY BASES, RADIO EQUIPMENT, TELEVISION EQUIPMENT, MILITARY BASE CLOSINGS, SURPLUS MILITARY EQUIPMENT SALES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 02 JAN 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** MorefiRH  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** ADDIS ABABA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1974/newtext/t19740167/aaaacleo.tel  
**Line Count:** 113  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ACTION AF  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Reference:** A) ASMARA 896; B) CNO 102359Z DEC 73  
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**Review Authority:** MorefiRH  
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**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 27 AUG 2002  
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**TAGS:** MARR, PFOR, ET, US, KAGNEW STATION  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005